



THE  
BARRISTER  
GROUP

# The Barrister Group's ‘ideal pupil barrister’ criteria

Mapped against the Professional Statement for  
Barristers

## High standards

This criterion includes the requirements to have:

- high standards of legal knowledge and the practical skills to interpret the law; and
- the ability to analyse and interpret evidence and information effectively.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

1. Uphold the reputation of the Bar and observe their duty to the court in the administration of justice.
  2. Have a knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and principles of public and private law.
  3. Have a knowledge and understanding of the law and procedure relevant to their area(s) of practice.
- 1.5 Apply effective analytical and evaluative skills to their work.
- 1.10 Make sound judgements in their work.
- 1.12 Employ effective research skills.
16. Comply with regulatory requirements set down by the Bar Standards Board, including the Code of Conduct.
  17. Know how to conduct themselves appropriately in court.
  18. Only accept work which they believe they are competent to undertake.
- 2.4 Ensure their work does not incur unnecessary fees.
- 2.5 Adopt a reflective approach to their work, enabling them to correct errors and admit if they have made mistakes.
- 3.1 Understand and exercise their duty to act in the best interests of their client.
- 3.6 Demonstrate a good awareness of their additional responsibilities in cases involving direct access and litigants in person

# Business acumen

This criterion includes:

- IT literacy;
- marketing and networking capabilities; and
- ability to manage own self-employed practice.

## **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

1.7 Negotiate effectively.

1. Where appropriate, possess a strong understanding of the specific implications of being a self-employed barrister.

2. Possess sufficient understanding of organisational and management skills to be able to maintain an effective and efficient practice.

3. Plan their personal workload and absences so as to ensure they deliver on all work commitments they have made.

4. Understand the organisational systems or structures within which they work and which support their delivery of a professional service.

4.7 Where necessary, be diligent in keeping good records and files of cases.

## Strong communication and advocacy skills

This criterion includes:

- written and oral advocacy;
- personability;
- client skills; and
- ability to work with others.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

2. Have a knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and principles of public and private law.
  3. Have a knowledge and understanding of the law and procedure relevant to their area(s) of practice.
  4. Have an awareness of the wide range of other organisations supporting the administration of justice.
  6. Provide clear, concise and accurate advice in writing and orally and take responsibility for it.
  7. Negotiate effectively.
  8. Exercise good English language skills.
  9. Exercise good communication skills, through any appropriate medium and with any audience as required in their work.
- 1.13 Draft court and other legal documents which are clear, concise, accurate and written so as to reflect fairly the arguments advanced by both sides.

## Strong communication and advocacy skills

This criterion includes:

- written and oral advocacy;
- personability;
- client skills; and
- ability to work with others.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

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14. Draft skeleton arguments which present the relevant facts, law and arguments in a clear, concise and well-structured manner.

15. Have persuasive oral advocacy skills.

2.3 Be aware and active in the pursuit of equality and respect for diversity, not tolerating unlawful discrimination, in themselves or others

2. Understand and apply principles of team working where appropriate.

3. Respond appropriately to those from diverse backgrounds and to the needs and sensitivities created by individual circumstances.

4. Treat all people with respect and courtesy, regardless of their background or circumstances.

3.6 Demonstrate a good awareness of their additional responsibilities in cases involving direct access and litigants in person.

## Drive and determination

This criterion will look at:

- the applicant's route to the Bar;
- professional experience (legal and non-legal work);
- difficulties the applicant has had to overcome; the reasons why they want to become a barrister at Clerksroom; and
- hard work.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

1.3 Have a knowledge and understanding of the law and procedure relevant to their area(s) of practice.

2.5 Adopt a reflective approach to their work, enabling them to correct errors and admit if they have made mistakes.

2.6 Ensure they practice with adaptability and flexibility, by being self-aware and self-directed, recognising and acting upon the continual need to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills.

## Flexibility and time management

This criterion will look at:

- whether the applicant can deliver work on time;
- work independently; and
- is prepared for a career at the Bar which often involves last minute changes and instructions.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

1.6 Provide clear, concise and accurate advice in writing and orally and take responsibility for it.

1.10 Make sound judgements in their work.

1.11 Ensure they are fully prepared.

2.5 Adopt a reflective approach to their work, enabling them to correct errors and admit if they have made mistakes.

3.5 Where appropriate, keep clients, whether lay or professional, informed of case progress in a clear and timely manner and manage their expectations.

4.3 Plan their personal workload and absences so as to ensure they deliver on all work commitments they have made.

4.4 Understand the organisational systems or structures within which they work and which support their delivery of a professional service.

4.6 Exercise good time-keeping in face-to-face or telephone encounters.

## Professionalism

Under this criterion we will consider general points which will be assessed throughout, such as:

- ethics;
- presentation of the application (no spelling mistakes, correct grammar etc); and
- whether the question that has been asked has been answered.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

1.1 Uphold the reputation of the Bar and observe their duty to the court in the administration of justice.

1.3 Have a knowledge and understanding of the law and procedure relevant to their area(s) of practice.

1.8 Exercise good English language skills.

1.11 Ensure they are fully prepared.

1.17 Know how to conduct themselves appropriately in court.

1.18 Only accept work which they believe they are competent to undertake.

1. Act with the utmost integrity and independence at all times, in the interests of justice, representing clients with courage, perseverance and fearlessness.

2. Be honest in their dealings with others.

3. Be aware and active in the pursuit of equality and respect for diversity, not tolerating unlawful discrimination, in themselves or others.

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## Professionalism

Under this criterion we will consider general points which will be assessed throughout, such as:

- ethics;
- presentation of the application (no spelling mistakes, correct grammar etc); and
- whether the question that has been asked has been answered.

### **BSB Professional Statement mapping:**

*Continued from previous page*

2.4 Ensure their work does not incur unnecessary fees.

2.5 Adopt a reflective approach to their work, enabling them to correct errors and admit if they have made mistakes.

3.1 Understand and exercise their duty to act in the best interests of their client.

3.4 Treat all people with respect and courtesy, regardless of their background or circumstances.

3.6 Demonstrate a good awareness of their additional responsibilities in cases involving direct access and litigants in person.

5. Maintain the confidentiality of their clients' affairs, adopting secure technology where appropriate.

6. Exercise good time-keeping in face-to-face or telephone encounters.

7. Where necessary, be diligent in keeping good records and files of cases.

## Demonstration of exceptionalism

This criterion will be met when a candidate can demonstrate they have gone above and beyond in their pursuit of a career at the Bar and achieved something which is outside the normal boundaries and expectations of an aspiring barrister.